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REBEL LEADER SAYS NICARAGUAN ELECTION COULD BECOME A 'FARCE'  
BY GREGORY NOKES  
WASHINGTON

Nicaraguan guerrilla leader Eden Pastora, still limping from wounds suffered in an assassination attempt, says elections scheduled by Nicaragua's leftist leaders for November are in danger of "being a farce."

Pastora appealed at a news conference here Monday for the United States and Western Europe to bring pressure on the Sandinistas to adopt a series of electoral reforms, including easing press restrictions.

"We seek establishment of effective democracy in Nicaragua as the only way to put an end to the bloodshed in our country and ensure peace in Central American," Pastora said.

Pastora, who was injured in an assassination attempt May 31, was still limping and walked with the aid of a cane. He told reporters he didn't know whether he was the victim of a plot by the "extreme left or the extreme right" but denied he had ever accused the CIA of being behind the attack.

Pastora said the Revolutionary Democratic Alliance (ARDE), which he heads, has 8,000 guerrillas fighting against government forces in southern Nicaragua. However, it has been widely reported that the CIA has cut off aid to Pastora because he has refused to join with guerrilla forces of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) in northern Nicaragua, who do receive CIA support.

Pastora said his forces, which he said are not aligned with anyone, will fight on alone, if necessary, "until the government is responsive to the people."

Pastora said he and a group of other opponents of the Sandinista government are seeking "an international consensus" to pressure the government to meet their election demands and bring about true democracy in Nicaragua.

"Elections are moving very clearly toward being a farce in Nicaragua," Pastora said.

Among the election reforms demanded by Pastora are a free press, political freedoms, safety guarantees for opposition candidates and the expulsion of foreign troops, including Cubans.

Congress has refused to provide new funds for any of the Nicaraguan guerrillas groups, including those supported by the CIA, raising a question of whether they can survive. President Reagan alleged last week that the lawmakers who have disapproved the aid are "supporting a totalitarian dictatorship in Nicaragua."

Pastora said he wasn't in Washington in search of arms, but did want political support. He met at the State Department with Undersecretary of State Michael Armacost and with Assistant Secretary of State Langhorne A. Motley.

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